some other states had had or were later to possess. It remained chiefly a coastal power. Both Wu and Yiieh seem to have depended in part upon boats for their victories, navigating these craft on the sea and on the rivers and lakes in which their possessions abounded. Wu, indeed, appears to have begun the Grand Canal, that great artificial waterway whose completion is attributed to the Mongols, nearly two millenniums later, and which, proceeding along the alluvial plain, helps to connect the valleys of the Yangtze and the Huang Ho. It is not strange that, relying so much on their water-craft, neither Wu nor Yiieh succeeded in making its authority effective over the interior.

Chin did not long survive Wu. Most of its territory being in the mountains, plains, and valleys of what is now Shansi, its internal barriers always threatened it with division into warring clans. This tendency was accentuated by the distribution of fiefs by the princes of Chin among their favorites and relatives. It is not surprising, therefore, that the authority of the princes declined and that toward the close of the fifth century Chin broke into three fragments (Han, Wei, and Chao). Neither of these was strong enough to occupy the dominant role in national politics formerly held by the united Chin.

THE PERIOD OP THE CONTENDING STATES AND THE TRIUMPH OF CH'lN

By the middle of the fifth century the old China was beginning to disappear and great changes were in progress. The feudal institutions of the past were disintegrating and new ideas appeared in administration, legislation, philosophy, and religion. As we shall see in a moment, the period was one of creative thought. Warfare among the many states which made up China had long

been part of the ordinary course of events. Such an outline as we have given probably seems intricate enough to those for the first time introduced to the story, but compared with the complexities of the detailed narratives it is simplicity itself. The scene now becomes even more confused and belligerent. To Chinese historians the era is known as that of the *Chan Kuo,* or Contending States. The Chou rulers became increasingly feeble and the feudatories in the older China dropped more than ever into the background—the prey of tht partially Chinese principalities on